

Professor Jean Morrison, University Provost and Chief Academic Officer

One Silber Way
Boston, Massachusetts 02215
T 617-353-2230 F 617-353-6580
www.bu.edu/provost

TO: Boston University Faculty and Staff

FROM: Jean Morrison, University Provost and Chief Academic Officer
Gary Nicksa, Senior Vice President for Operations

DATE: October 31, 2019

SUBJECT: Report of the LGBTQIA+ Task Force and Next Steps

Last fall, we [formed](#) the Task Force on LGBTQIA+ Faculty and Staff and charged the group with recommending ways to improve the workplace experience of Boston University's LGBTQIA+ faculty and staff. The Task Force completed its work last spring and submitted its recommendations in a comprehensive and thoughtful [report](#). We are grateful to the Task Force members for the time and work they put into this important effort.

We are pleased to announce that we will immediately adopt several of the Task Force's recommendations. Most notably, as prioritized by the Task Force, we have approved the creation of a professionally staffed LGBTQIA+ center, primarily focused on faculty and staff, tentatively titled the Q-BU Center. This center will have dedicated physical space adjacent to the Howard Thurman Center in 808 Commonwealth Ave., and will be led by a staff director, who will report to the Associate Provost for Diversity & Inclusion. As recommended by the Task Force, the LGBTQIA+ center will offer the BU community programming and resources, facilitate connections within and outside the University, and provide a physical space for networking and community-building. We envision that the director will partner with existing groups across campus, including student groups, and thus the new center will augment existing resources. The second highest recommendation of the Task Force was the establishment and maintenance of a centralized BU LGBTQIA+ website. Once the Q-BU center is established, we will support the center staff in creating and maintaining this website.

In addition, we are happy to work together to determine how best to implement other Task Force recommendations. We are supportive of offering BU community members the opportunity to self-identify their sexual orientation and gender identity as part of the onboarding process. Human Resources will be tasked with implementing this recommendation. We will also work with Marketing & Communications to pay particular attention to increasing the positive visibility of gender and sexual minorities through our media presence, and to develop inclusive communication guidelines and resources.

We are very pleased to be moving forward with these initiatives which we believe represent significant and positive steps toward being a more inclusive and welcoming university

community. Thanks again to all of the members of the Task Force on LGBTQIA+ Faculty and Staff for their dedication and hard work over the last year.

Task Force on LGBTQIA+ Faculty and Staff

Co-Chairs:

Judi Burgess, Director of Labor Relations

Karen Warkentin, Professor of Biology and Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies, College of Arts & Sciences

Members:

Willow Burke, Financial Analyst, Disability & Access Services

Derek Howe, Vice President, Budget, Planning & Business Affairs

Terence Keane, Professor of Psychiatry and Clinical Psychology and Assistant Dean for Research, School of Medicine; Director, National Center for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, and Associate Chief of Staff for Research & Development, VA Boston Healthcare System

Steve Marois, Director of Faculty Actions, Office of the Provost

Merav Opher, Associate Professor of Astronomy, College of Arts & Sciences

Anthony Petro, Associate Professor of Religion and Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies, College of Arts & Sciences

Michelle Porche, Clinical Associate Professor of Applied Human Development, Wheelock College of Education & Human Development

Stacy Ulrich, Director of Student Programs and Leadership, College of Arts & Sciences

Robert Volk, Associate Professor of Legal Writing and Director, Legal Writing and Appellate Advocacy Program, School of Law

Jacob Vukelich, IT Systems Administrator II, College of Arts & Sciences

William Waters, Associate Professor of German and Comparative Literature and Associate Director, Center for the Study of Europe, College of Arts & Sciences

Ann Zumwalt, Associate Professor of Anatomy & Neurobiology, School of Medicine

Staff:

Abby Burmeister, Administrative Coordinator, Diversity & Inclusion